

Thompson who has served through several conflicts and crises, or a host of others I do not know or have the room to remember here, the members of the United States Armed Forces are just regular people who in normal everyday life are mothers, fathers, neighbors, friends, businessmen, teachers, or just plain old folks like me.

These ordinary folks are called upon to do extraordinary duties during a time of war or crisis. They are not allowed the luxury of protesting a war. In fact, they are called upon to put their very life on the line in order to protect the right of the protester or to bring that right to the oppressed.

Attending the National Security Forum was a very humbling and very rewarding experience. If I learned anything while there, I learned that those serving in our military are an extremely impressive group of people. They do not take their duty lightly and they are very aware of all the costs of war and conflict. I also learned that our elected and military leaders know a lot more about our world and the perils we face than I do.

Wars have probably always been debated. While I believe the United States has a responsibility to the global community, I am not absolutely sure of what that responsibility should be. However, I trust our leaders to make the correct decisions based upon the evidence they face. I realize that I know little about world affairs or the evidence that brings our leaders to a decision to take military action. Only as our present circumstance with Iraq becomes history will we know the outcome. While I hope that history will show that the outcome was very positive, I cannot know that to be the case today.

This, however, I do know: I am certain that once a military action ensues, our leaders and the men and women of our military deserve our prayers, not our protests. There will always be time to debate the war. Now, however, more than ever, our leaders and especially those serving in the military deserve our prayers. But for the extraordinary circumstance they have been put into, these great Americans who are serving our country in the combat zone are just regular folks like us. They need us to lift them up in our thoughts and our prayers. In my opinion, through their personal sacrifice and service, these servants have earned it and they deserve it.

**TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN LEGION
AUXILIARY UNIT NO. 44 OF MAR-
QUETTE, MI, RECOGNIZING THE
SUCCESS OF THEIR POPPY SALE
FUNDRAISING**

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker; I would like to recognize a group in my district whose volunteers put in hundreds of hours every year to raise money for local veterans while encouraging public remembrance of veterans on Memorial Day.

The Richard M. Jopling American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 44 of Marquette recently donated \$3,500 in proceeds from its annual poppy sale to the D.J. Jacobetti Veterans Home in Marquette. This money—a truly remarkable sum—will let the Jacobetti Home purchase two portable WelchAllyn machines, used to monitor a patient's vital signs and provide an extra margin of safety for patients needing that support.

There could be no better time than the present, when the welfare of all our veterans and military personnel are in the minds of every American, to recognize the contributions of the Marquette American Legion Auxiliary No. 44. In these times of tight budgets, the efforts of these sterling volunteer service organizations are also critical to meeting the needs of our nation's veterans.

The sight of the Auxiliary's red crepe-paper poppies signals the arrival of spring in Marquette and also reminds the public of the sacrifices our veterans have made to protect our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 44 of Marquette also sponsors birthday parties for residents of the Jacobetti Home every month of the year.

In addition to the poppy sales and the birthday parties, the Auxiliary supplies gifts for the Jacobetti Home Christmas "Gift Shop" and sponsors a ladies friendship group at the veteran's facility.

Mr. Speaker, the world is a better place thanks to groups like American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 44 of Marquette. I ask you and our colleagues to join me in recognizing and applauding their efforts.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO MAINE
SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL CONSTITU-
TION TEAM**

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, 24 exceptional students from the 9th Congressional District are ready to compete against the smartest and the brightest from around the country in the National finals of the We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution. The 24 students, all seniors from Maine South High School in Park Ridge, IL, have recently won the Illinois State competition and will represent our great State in the national finals.

What does it take to make it into the finals of this prestigious contest? What does it take to make it this far? The answer is clear: Dedication, hard work, and countless hours reading, researching, and studying the great document that is the foundation of our democracy: the Constitution of the United States of America—the symbol of personal freedom and protection.

Each year, the "We the People" foundation hosts district, state and national level congressional-style hearings on the history and principles of Constitutional democracy in the United States. Participants are tested on their knowledge of the Constitution and its foundations and applications to our country.

The "We the People" contest is an invaluable learning experience for Maine South high school students and other students from around the country. The program helps promote democracy and encourages civic participation in the issues of critical importance to our freedoms by young men and women and I am hopeful they will carry those lessons with them into the future.

I would like to commend the students of Maine South High School's Constitution Team and their academic advisor Dan States for their hard work and great scholastic achieve-

ment, and I wish them the best of luck in the National Finals.

**TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF PLEAS-
ANT RIDGE, MICHIGAN ON THEIR
75TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my congratulations to the City of Pleasant Ridge, its residents and its elected leadership, on the anniversary of the city's 75th year of incorporation.

The City of Pleasant Ridge is a beautiful bedroom community located, just north of the City of Detroit, in south Oakland County. With tree-lined streets, warmly cared for yards, and historic brick homes, the City of Pleasant Ridge is truly a "jewel" in the metropolitan area.

This settlement began in 1913 when Burt Taylor subdivided the Mayday farm. The settlement was incorporated as a village in 1921 and as a city in 1927. This city is now home to over 2,500 individuals and 1,000 families.

The City of Pleasant Ridge has a sense of community that can be seen at the bustling community center where they hold a variety of community events and classes, through the numerous community organizations and wide-ranging activities like the garden tours, auctions, scholarship grants to graduating high school students, active participation in the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise and so many other wonderful community-wide activities.

The city has also had an impact beyond its borders in the Michigan community. Ashton Berst, an early City Administrator, was one of a dozen local government officials instrumental in forming the Michigan Municipal League. Pleasant Ridge is also the hometown of a former Member of Congress, and Governor of the State of Michigan, James Blanchard.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in sending every good wish to the City of Pleasant Ridge on their 75th anniversary. Indeed, they have much to be proud of. My heartiest congratulations to the residents, the community activists, and all of the members of the city administration. I look forward to many more years of working together, and being part of the fabric of this important community.

**HONORING TERI JACKSON FOR
HER 17 YEARS OF SERVICE TO
THE GRAND PRAIRIE CITY COUN-
CIL**

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Teri Jackson of Grand Prairie. Teri has exemplified the finest qualities of leadership and service and today I wish to honor her for her 17 year commitment to the City Council and the citizens of Grand Prairie.

A life long resident of Grand Prairie, Teri began her service on the City Council in the

mid-1980s. She has guided the city through some very important milestones, including negotiations for a Class I horse racetrack, Lone Star Park at Grand Prairie. During these negotiations she was able to secure property for the Grand Prairie Tourism Information Center. The center was able to realize a prime location much sooner than anticipated thanks to the donated property and funds saved.

A Council Member since 1986, Teri has also served as Mayor Pro Tem from 1994–1995, Secretary on the Grand Prairie Sports Facilities Development Corporation since 1993, and as Finance and Government Committee Chairwoman since 1990. In addition she has also held advisory positions on the Regional Transportation Council, EMS task forces, and Compensation Negotiations Committee.

Mrs. Jackson is a graduate from the Prestigious Leadership Texas program for outstanding women in leadership roles. On a national level, she has served on the National League of Cities policy steering committee.

During her years of service to the city of Grand Prairie, Teri has been recognized with numerous awards. She earned the 1994 Athena Award and 1995 Chairman of the Board Award from the Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce and the 1996 Woman of Distinction from Soroptomist International. On three different occasions she has received the MAP Award for outstanding performance from her employer.

Mr. Speaker, Teri Jackson exemplifies the qualities of dedication and service as both an employee public servant and citizen of Grand Prairie, Texas. I know my colleagues will join me today to honor her.

ARMED FORCES TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker; thousands of former servicemen and servicewomen in five states are currently prohibited from receiving state-financed home mortgages backed by the sale of federally tax-exempt bonds. That is why Congressman HERGER and I, along with 36 of our colleagues, are introducing the Veterans American Dream Homeownership Assistance Act. This legislation is similar to bills we introduced in the 104th, 105th, 106th, and 107th Congresses.

In order to help veterans own a home, Congress created a program where states could issue bonds exempt from federal income tax in order to raise funds to finance mortgages for owner-occupied residences. Five states—Wisconsin, Alaska, Oregon, California, and Texas—implemented such a program for their veterans. Under a little-known provision in the 1984 tax bill, Congress limited the veterans eligible for this program to those who began military service before 1977.

As a result of the 1984 tax bill, veterans who entered military service after January 1, 1977 are prohibited from receiving a low-interest mortgage financed by federal tax-exempt bonds. This means veterans who served honorably in Panama, Grenada, the Gulf War, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and now Iraq cannot

benefit from this partnership between the federal government and these five states. Are those who began serving our country after January 1, 1977 any less deserving than those who served before?

This arbitrary cutoff was created to raise additional revenue in the 1984 tax bill by limiting the issuance of tax-exempt bonds. When this provision was enacted, post-1976 veterans were a small percentage of all veterans, without much voice to protest this discriminatory change. But, over two decades later, there are thousands of veterans who have served our nation honorably.

Mr. Speaker, as time goes by, this legislation takes on increasing importance. The State of Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs has informed me that if the cap on veterans bonds is not lifted, the State will be forced to disband the program because too few veterans are eligible for the program.

This legislation would simply eliminate the cutoff that exists under current law. Under our proposal, former servicemen and servicewomen in the five states who served our country beginning before or after January 1, 1977 will be eligible to qualify for a low cost mortgage financed by federal tax-exempt bonds. This legislation does not increase federal discretionary spending by 1 cent. It simply allows the five states that have a mortgage finance program for their veterans to provide mortgages to all veterans regardless of when they served in the military.

There is no justification to allow some veterans to qualify for these home mortgages while others cannot. Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to help those veterans who have served after January 1, 1977 to own a home and pass this important legislation into law.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DONALD GERTH

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in tribute to a man with a truly distinguished career in academia. To say that Dr. Donald Gerth has made an indelible mark in higher education would only begin to skim the surface of the many wonderful contributions that he has made as an educator since he took his first teaching job in 1947 as a substitute high school math teacher. After more than a half-century of outstanding public service, Dr. Gerth will soon retire from the post of President of California State University, Sacramento. As his family, friends, colleagues, and admirers gather to celebrate Dr. Gerth's illustrious career, I ask all my colleagues to join me in saluting one of Sacramento most outstanding citizen leaders.

Dr. Gerth earned his Bachelor's of Arts, Master's, and Doctorate degrees in Political Science at the prestigious University of Chicago. Upon completion of his education, Dr. Gerth applied his great expertise in Asian political systems by serving as an Air Force Intelligence Captain from 1952–1956. After his stint in the Air Force, Dr. Gerth joined the staff of his alma mater, University of Chicago.

In 1958, Dr. Gerth and his wife, Ms. Beverly J. Gerth, moved west to California and began his forty-five year association with the Cali-

fornia State University system. From 1958 to 1963, Dr. Gerth served as Associate Dean of Students and member of the Department of Government from 1958–1963. In 1964, Dr. Gerth accepted the post of Professor of Political Science at California State University, Chico in 1964. During his twelve-year tenure at California State University, Chico, Dr. Gerth also served as Vice President for Academic Affairs from 1970–1976. In addition, Dr. Gerth also lent his valuable services to the university through his roles as Dean of Students, Coordinator of the Institute for Local Government and Public Service and Public Administration, and Co-Director of a Danforth Foundation Research Project on improvement of undergraduate teaching. Dr. Gerth's willingness to tackle a variety of challenges is a testament to his steadfast commitment to bring about positive changes in higher learning.

In 1976, Dr. Gerth was appointed the President of California State University, Dominguez Hills, a post that he would hold for eight years. In July of 1984, Dr. Gerth was named the President of California State University, Sacramento. California State University has experienced significant increases in enrollment and number of degrees awarded under Dr. Gerth's stewardship. California State University, Sacramento is now the sixth largest campus in the twenty three-campus California State University system. In recent years, California State University, Sacramento has initiated many new opportunities for learning such as some year-round programs, evening and weekend offerings, offcampus sites, and technology-based classes via computer or television. It is evident that Dr. Gerth's leadership has played an instrumental role in making California State University, Sacramento one of the most important universities in the state of California.

In addition to his duties as President of California State University, Sacramento, Dr. Gerth is also one of the most influential policy leaders in higher education. Dr. Gerth is the past President of the International Association of University Presidents from 1996–1999. He also served as a member of the Advisory Committee on Higher Education to the Director-General and as a member of the seven-person Steering Committee for the World Conference on Higher Education held in 1998. Dr. Gerth was recently appointed by the U.N. Secretary General and the Director-General of UNESCO to a six-year term on the United Nations University Council, the governing board of the United Nations University is headquartered in Tokyo. It gives me great comfort to know that Dr. Gerth will continue to share his wealth of knowledge and experience in higher education with the world in his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, as Dr. Gerth's friends, family, and colleagues gather to celebrate his great career, I am honored to pay tribute to one of Sacramento's most honorable citizens. Dr. Gerth's continuous leadership is a true testament to public service. If a template for commitment to education could be made, it would surely bear the resemblance of my dear friend Dr. Donald Gerth. Although his tenure as university President may soon be over, his involvement in community service and education is, fortunate for us, far from over. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in wishing Dr. Donald Gerth continued success in all his future endeavors.